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Degree Program at TAU: MSc Technology Management

Host University: Chicago Booth (The University of Chicago School of Business)

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General Overview

When I first heard about the opportunity to participate in an exchange student program, I was excited and frightened at the same time. To take a 3 months break of your life is never easy, but once I talked with several return students and compared the pros and cons, it was one of the easiest decisions I have ever made.

I chose to do the exchange period over my final semester, and after a long service in the army, as a period for rethinking about my future career path – and the environment of The University of Chicago's Booth was the perfect location for it – amazing academic courses with fascinating successful multicultural people.

On this summary I will try to convince you why you should choose Booth as your desired location, and share some tips for whom who already planned of coming.

Either way, don't hesitate to reach out and ask me more!!

Why Chicago?

I chose immediately to study in the US – for academic and cultural reasons

The business schools in the US are always on the top of the world, and Collier has a collaboration with the best of them. To live, breath and study in English are important to anyone who seeks a future job in an international company.

On the other hand, the US has a lot to offer on the cultural side – you can travel to the most popular cities in the world or take a car to nature experience.

Within the US, Chicago has the best of the two worlds. The university is amazing and considered one of the best in the country, and is one of the most important economic and technological centers in the US.

Chicago is the third largest city in the US, but is one of the easiest to navigate, and the cost of living there is way cheaper than the other largest cities. Chicago's location in the north-center of the US, makes her a perfect hub for traveling all across the state and beyond (Mexico, Canada, Cuba and more countries can be reached in short time and low cost of flight).

Few examples of the unacademic experience:

- Concerts – the big city of Chicago attracts the most popular artists in the world. I went to a lot of concerts, such as Muse, Gorillaz, Twenty one Pilots, Dua Lipa, Jane, etc.
- Museums – Some of the best art, science, nature and history museums in the US are located in Chicago – Most of them are free for students!
- Trips – I went to the Grand Canyon, New York City, Vegas, Canada, Nashville and Los Angeles.

The University of Chicago

Booth is the business school of The University of Chicago, one of the most successful private universities in the US. Chicago is well known for the highest number of Nobel prize winners among its' faculty members and alumni (such as Barack Obama).

Booth is usually rank among the top5 business school among the US, and in 2019's rank even ranked number 1 (tied with Harvard). Booth has produced more Nobel laureates in the Economic Sciences (28)[3] than any other school and is second only to the University of Cambridge in total.

Booth has two campuses: one in Hyde Park, over the south part of Chicago, within the University of Chicago; and one in Downtown Chicago, the town's business center (evening and weekend courses).

Both of the campuses have a lot to offer besides of educational courses: seminars, inspirational lectures, career center and plenty of after-school activities: networking events, students clubs (including soccer, basketball, strategy games, dancing and wine tasting clubs 😊), parties, joint trips and much more.

Being an exchange student in Booth

I was the lone Israeli exchange student among 40 exchange students from the best business schools all over the world. As an exchange student, we were able to take whatever courses we wish to- even got to participate in the bidding process as second-year students, what made an advantage for us.

Beside the "exchangers" there are many international students. Booth is really welcoming students all over the world, so it's not rare to find a full-time student who is not an American – even around 20 Israelis.

As you can see, the atmosphere in Booth is very welcoming. All the students are really nice and patient, and the staff members don't make any difference between exchange and full-time students. So overall, I felt in a perfect position between the full-time students, the exchange students and the "Israeli community" in Booth.



Studies

The studies in Booth is in the right balance between high academic level and demanded participation from the students. Booth is very proud for it's well-known lecturers and diverse curriculum, so it's easy to find the right courses for you.

In the "courses search" website, you can find plenty of information regarding the courses' contents, assignments and even accurate amount of hours the past students spend on the course each week – spend enough time on it in order to cleverly choose the courses.

Each exchange students required to take between 3 to 5 courses, while the recommended amount is 3 in order to have enough time to spend on the variety of activities Booth has to offer.

I still took 4 courses, each one was different and interesting on its own way:

- **New Venture Strategy (Proof. James E. Schrager)** – amazing course with a brilliant lecturer. In the course I learned how to analyze strategies of different business, with a focus on new ventures, and predict their success or failure. I highly recommend this course!
- **Strategies and Processes of Negotiation (Proof. Anuj Shah)** – fun and life-important course, with an amazing lecturer. This course guided me through the science and art of negotiation. I learned the practice of negotiation through exercises and case analyses which in my opinion has really high importance to our everyday lives. Highly recommend!
- **Entrepreneurial Selling (Proof. Michael D. Alter)** – a practical course that has a goal on teaching the sales part of entrepreneurial businesses. During the course I joined to a local start-up and was responsible for the sales – including calling future costumers and building a sales plan. The course is highly recommended for future entrepreneurs.
- **Application Development (Mr. Raghu Betina)** – a practical course that aims to teach MBA students how to build a website on their own. Really recommended whether you have previous programming experience (as me) and want to learn new code languages (such as HTML, CSS, Ruby) or have no previous experience but have the motivation to learn from scratch.

Accommodation¹

There are several factors to consider when selecting housing in Chicago while on exchange which includes:

- Convenience to campus
- Convenience to everything else (grocery, public transportation, etc.)
- Available housing options (type, size, quantity)
- Time available to spend on apartment/condo hunting
- Personal taste
- Community; proximity to other Booth students
- Price (determined by apartment size categories and location)

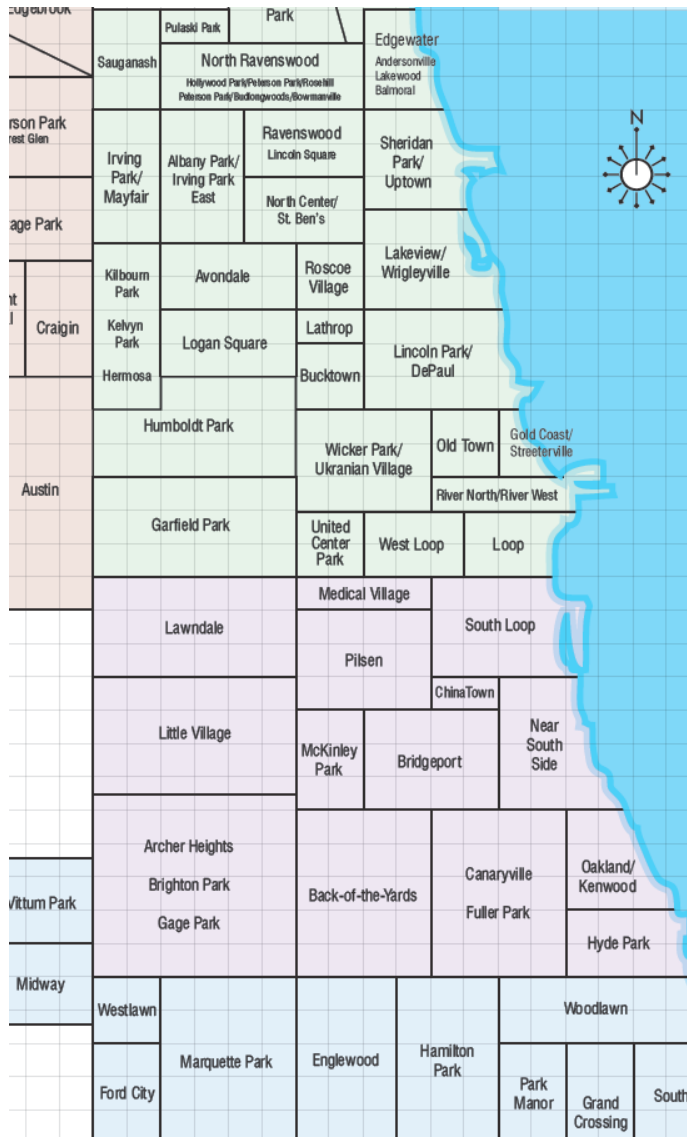
Good sources on housing information include:

- Craigslist (www.chicago.craigslist.org)

¹ Taken from Booth's welcoming packet

- Domu (www.domu.com)
- Chicago Reader (www.chicagoreader.com)
- Chicago Tribune (www.chicagotribune.com)
- Yahoo newsgroup

Chicago has many different neighborhoods where Booth students choose to live. Here is a map which shows the location of different neighborhoods in Chicago:



Pros/cons for the different neighborhoods:

Neighborhoods	Things to consider
<p>Downtown Approximately 75% of students (including South Loop)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer commute to campus (best public transportation option is to take the Metra; 15-30 min. by car) • More expensive apartments and parking • Easy to find apartments. Millennium Park Plaza and Columbus Plaza are two most popular buildings. • No need for car; many transportation options are available • Good restaurant/bar selection and entertainment options (theaters etc.) • Proximity to students; most of the students, particularly
<p>Hyde Park Approximately 10% of students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy commute to campus (bus service) • Cheaper apartments (typically) and cheaper parking. Many students choose to live in Regents Park or Hyde Park Towers which are a bit more expensive. • Not as many restaurants/bars in the neighborhood • Transportation to/from Hyde Park in the evenings is not very convenient as cabs are not as available • Easy to find apartment • There is a number of Booth students living in Hyde Park, but the number is considerably smaller than that of students living in downtown
<p>Old Town/Gold Coast (located just north of downtown) Approximately 5% of students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer commute to campus. Public transportation: no direct train, will have to make connection and take Metra; 25-35 min. by car) – Would not recommend moving here without a car! • Very connected to the rest of Chicago • More expensive apartments and parking • Not as easy to find apartments. Best to use apartment finding services • Excellent restaurant/bar selection and entertainment options (theaters etc.); Best nightlife in close proximity • Very close to North beach (most popular lake beach spot in Chicago) • Very distinct Chicago neighborhood feel

Bonus – some cool pictures 😊



